



Does this apply to my building?

This [Clean Buildings Performance Standard](#) is mandatory for all **covered commercial buildings** located in the state of Washington.

A *covered commercial building* is a building where the sum of nonresidential, hotel, motel and dormitory floor areas exceeds 50,000 square feet, excluding the parking garage area.

Exemptions apply as listed in WAC 194-50 [Annex Z4.1](#). The owner of a covered commercial building is required to document and report compliance with the standard to Commerce according to the following schedule and every five years thereafter. Exemption certificates are only valid for the cycle in which they were issued.

Here are a few frequently asked questions to better understand who needs to comply with the standard:

Compliance Dates

June 1, 2026
More than 220,000 sq. ft.

June 1, 2027
More 90,000 sq. ft. but less than 220,001 sq. ft.

June 1, 2028
More 50,000 sq. ft. but less than 90,001 sq. ft.

1) Does the law apply to public buildings, such as state owned facilities?

If the public building exceeds 50,000 sf of floor area, then yes, the building will need to comply with the law.

2) Are schools considered a covered commercial building by this standard?

Yes, school buildings that exceed 50,000 sf of floor area shall comply with the standard. *Covered commercial buildings* are all nonresidential, hotel, motel and dormitory buildings with floor areas exceeding 50,000 square feet, excluding the parking garage area.

3) Is student housing covered by law?

Yes, student housing shall comply with the standard if it is defined by Washington state buildings codes as dormitory regardless of whether it is publicly or privately owned.

4) Does the law apply to federal buildings?

No. Federal buildings are not required to comply with the standard.

5) How does compliance work for campuses that have multiple buildings below 50,000 sf (but in total are greater than 50,000 sf)?

The standard is based on the size of a single building and not the aggregate floor area of buildings on a campus. If a building on a campus exceeds 50,000 sf of floor area, then yes, the building will need to comply with the law.

6) How does compliance work for buildings that share a meter(s) with other buildings?

Buildings that are not independently metered from other buildings cannot measure energy use intensity (EUI). These buildings must meet the investment criteria of the Clean Building Performance Standard in lieu of meeting a target EUI.

7) Are there penalties for not complying?

Yes, Commerce is authorized to impose administrative penalties on building owners who fail to comply. Failure to comply by the scheduled reporting date will result in progressive penalties. Building owners out of compliance will be issued a first and second notice. They can respond with a mitigation plan to avoid maximum penalty.

8) How is Commerce contacting buildings owners to let them know about mandatory compliance?

Commerce is identifying buildings that are over 50,000 sf of floor area throughout the state. Building owners of identified *covered commercial buildings* can expect to receive a notification letter. The letter will include instructions on how to log into the Clean Buildings Portal to create an account, verify building characteristics and apply for exemptions and incentives.

9) What if I am notified as a *covered commercial building* owner in error, for example I sold the building?

You will be able to notify Commerce through the Clean Buildings Portal without needing to create an account.

10) My building data in the notification looks incorrect. What should I do?

Errors can be corrected through the Clean Buildings Portal. Instructions on how to create an account will be included in the notification letter.

11) Are there any exemptions for covered commercial buildings?

There are buildings that are eligible to apply for exemption. The list can be found in WAC 194-50 Annex Z4.1. An exemption application can be submitted through the Clean Buildings Portal. Approved exemptions are only valid for the current compliance cycle.

12) How does the law apply to buildings with a mix of *covered commercial building* use and exempt use?

Exemption requirements vary. Refer to the exemption requirements in WAC 194-50 Annex Z4.1 for specifics. If a building does not meet the exemption criteria of Annex Z4.1 full compliance is mandatory.

13) What can I do if I'm experiencing financial hardship?

Conditions of financial hardship is an exemption listed in WAC 194-50 Annex Z4.1. Building owners experiencing financial hardship can apply for exemption through the Clean Buildings Portal. Approved exemptions are only valid for the current compliance cycle.

14) I have buildings connected to each other, are they considered one building or two?

